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NEWS RELEASE

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**FRESNO GANG MEMBERS ARRESTED ON FEDERAL WARRANTS;
SEARCH WARRANTS SERVED**

FRESNO – United States Attorney McGregor Scott, Fresno Chief of Police Jerry Dyer, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) Special Agent in Charge Paul J. Vido, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Special Agent in Charge Javier Pena, and Fresno County District Attorney Elizabeth Egan announced today that members of the Violent Crime Impact Team (“VCIT”) collaborated in two investigations of firearms and drug dealing activities of alleged Fink-White and Modoc gang members in Fresno. These investigations culminated with the service of ten search warrants authorized by a United States Magistrate Judge in the Eastern District of California seeking evidence of various firearms and drug trafficking offenses.

This case was the result of a joint investigation by the Fresno Violent Crime Impact Team (VCIT) consisting of Special Agents from ATF and DEA, Officers of the Fresno Police Department, and Deputies from the United States Marshal’s Service. These joint investigations were initiated in October 2005. The investigations revolved around activities centered in the Southwest region of Fresno which has been plagued by violence related to drug trafficking.

Four individuals have been indicted. MANDEL WRIGHT, aka “Dingo,” MELVIN RAY WHITEHEAD, aka “Ray-Ray,” aka “Holler,” GARY BROWN, aka “Field Rat,” and JAMES JACKSON, aka “Jug,” all of Fresno have been charged with conspiracy to distribute and distribution of 50 grams and more of cocaine base and distribution of cocaine base. The indictments allege that these charges result from ongoing drug trafficking activities that began no later than October 2005. The charges result from allegations that involve eight separate controlled purchases of more than 180 grams of crack cocaine from MANDEL WRIGHT and MELVIN WHITEHEAD, and three separate controlled purchases of more than 50 grams of crack cocaine from GARY BROWN and JAMES JACKSON. The allegations arise from incidents that occurred in the “Corner Pocket,” an area of the city that is comprised of locations in the area of Stanislaus and ‘A’ Street.

Search warrants were served this morning at 456 E. Stanislaus, Apartments 103, 104 and 105, 1467 'A' Street, Apartment 102, 2804 W. Indianapolis Avenue, 1119 S. Modoc, 3055 W. McKinley, Apartment 103, 446 W. Strother, and on two vehicles. As a result, BRIAN KEITH WILLIAMS has been charged with possession of crack cocaine with the intent to distribute following the discovery of approximately 15 grams of crack cocaine in his vehicle. Additionally, crack cocaine, marijuana, a police scanner, and an SKS assault rifle with a loaded magazine were recovered from 456 E. Stanislaus, Apartment 103.

This investigation and prosecution was a direct result of the federal government's Violent Crime Impact Team ("VCIT") program which focuses federal resources on specific high-crime areas of Fresno. Special Agents from ATF and DEA, Officers of the Fresno Police Department, MAGEC, and California State Parole Officers combined to serve search and arrest warrants this morning.

If convicted of the charges as alleged in the charging documents, WRIGHT, WHITEHEAD, BROWN, JACKSON and WILLIAMS face up to life imprisonment and a mandatory minimum of ten years imprisonment.

The charges are only allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

United States Attorney Scott praised the work of the agents and officers involved in this case stating, "We are dedicated to keeping our communities safe from illegal firearms and drug traffickers. That's why we believe so strongly in our Violent Crime Impact Team initiative. This federal and local cooperative is aimed at reducing gang and gun violence in our community, and their presence should now be known to the criminal element in Fresno."

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